



Silvio Germann

in the interview



Restaurant IGNIV, Bad Ragaz
17 GaultMillau points,
1 Michelin star

We celebrate our 10 years anniversary with Lifestyle by V-ZUG. What would you like the anniversary to bring you or Lifestyle?

I would like for us – that is, V-ZUG – to run one of our cool events involving lots of different chefs in another country, since so far these have only taken place in Switzerland. I don't mind where. Munich, Shanghai or Istanbul would definitely be exciting for us and also for the V-ZUG brand.

What's your vision for the next 10 years? What could the ambassadors do?

I think a lot will happen in the next ten years, and not just in terms of steam cooker development. On our last visit to V-ZUG we could see that they are constantly developing new ideas. I'm sure that these will be very exciting for everyone, including the catering industry; in fact I think some of them may well be the next big thing.

What does partnership mean to you?

Of course there must be give and take. I always look forward to getting involved with V-ZUG events during the year, especially working in the Food Truck. We've got some passionate new young chefs and it's a lot of fun.

We're touring Switzerland with our Food Truck: what makes cooking in our Food Truck special for you? What can guests expect from you?

The thing that makes the Food Truck most special is the fact that it can go anywhere, or almost anywhere. Cooking in the open air is something rather unique. And also the Food Truck is fitted out perfectly – it's like being in my own kitchen with everything I need.

Do you have a first/early (childhood) memory that you associate with food or cooking in general?

When I was young I never had to help my mum do the cooking,



I always preferred to be outdoors playing football. We ate really well in my family, my mum prepared everything freshly and we had a lot of pizza because we had a pizza oven. Using it was always a highlight for me: you had to light the oven 3 hours beforehand and then everyone sat outside and ate home-made pizza, which for me was always the best bit by far!

What should eating be about today?

I really enjoy eating out with my friends in relaxed surroundings. Eating out has to be enjoyable, but I do think that it's about more than just the food. There's a big focus on making eating into an occasion, and in our restaurant we try to offer our guests a complete experience, starting with a friendly welcome and finishing with an espresso.

What values do you and your cuisine represent?

We try, of course, to use as much from the region as possible. And to keep things seasonal. We also now have our own greenhouse and grow our own herbs. I think it's really important not to disguise food, for example squash should look like squash and people should be able to identify it as such, so that when there are lots of dishes in the middle of the table in keeping with our culinary concept of sharing, our guests aren't even more overwhelmed.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

In our restaurant the whole team gets involved. Of course in the end it's my decision, but I think it's important that we all discuss the menu. It's also very helpful to go out for a break and clear your head sometimes, and not just to stay in the kitchen. Chefs are always striving to be better; it would be wrong to come to work every day and think you didn't need to improve on anything. We try to get better every day. Ultimately it's the guests who decide if they want to come back, and the more often you spot a familiar face, the better.

Why did you choose the aperitif for the anniversary dinner?

Every menu starts off with some good hors d'oeuvres. My selection is fairly varied with different textures and flavours. We've got squash, potatoes, and a little truffle with the puréed potato – one is quite hard and the other refreshing. After my contribution the menu itself can get going, I'm happy to leave that up to the others.

Which heating mode/steam cooker programme is most useful when preparing food?

The key heating modes that I need for my hors d'oeuvre are convection or combined top and bottom heating, but on a daily basis I mostly use the steam function. Those are the key heating modes that we use every day.

Do you have any serving tips?

The most important thing is to serve the food relatively quickly. In my hors d'oeuvres there are things that might lose their shape, like the puffed potatoes, and the crème fraîche snow on the squash might melt. Also guests should eat everything as quickly as possible and in just one mouthful.

From look and feel to smell and taste is our guiding principle: what treat do you particularly like to conjure up in the V-ZUG Combi-Steam?

At the moment we have a chocolate soufflé on our menu. It's quite light but has a strong chocolatey flavour, which is why it's currently my favourite dish made with the V-ZUG steam cooker.